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INFO: CINCPAC
DEPCHJUSMAGTHAI

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JOINT STATE/DEFENSE MESSAGE

SUBJ: U.S. Support for Military Activities in Laos

REFS: A. SECDEF 3806/081700Z JUN 71
B. JCS 5541/202201Z AUG 71

1. The JCS plan for establishment of DEPCH/Udorn has been approved by high level interagency committee. Ambassador Godley, who also attended meeting, concurs. JCS have, therefore, directed CINCPAC to implement the plan.

2. Embassy Bangkok should, after examining plan (being pouched), discuss new arrangement with RTG, keeping in mind the DEPCH move already discussed with General Kriangsak, who foresaw no RTG difficulty. It is not

anticipated that overall ceiling in Thailand or strength

State Dept review completed

OSD/PA - Col Burke (draft) 2/2/77

J-5 - McAn Elder (draft) 2/2/77

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of DEPCH organization will be increased by this change.

It is planned that DEPCH will be general or flag officer, but exact rank/service and relationship to other activities in Thailand remain to be finalized.

3. Embassy Vientiane should discuss with RLG as Embassy sees fit but definitely inform RLG before press might inquire.

4. We plan classified briefing on this move for staff of Senate Armed Services Committee in connection with anticipated debate about amendments concerning Laos, and other committee staffs will be briefed if desired. At time of this briefing, tentatively scheduled for 1 Sept, we should be prepared to respond to press inquiry on move.

5. For Amembassy Vientiane: In coordination with Amembassy Bangkok request you develop statement and/or

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questions and answers to anticipated press queries for clearance by State and Defense. Such statements should emphasize that the DEPCO move is in the interest of efficiency in managing current, unchanged programs for Laos and does not presage expanded US activities.

END

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